



Fayetteville VA Medical Center *Community Update*

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Items of interest for our stakeholders

September 2010

VA offers easier way to get Pharmacy questions answered

Beginning August 2, 2010 the professionally trained VA staff at the Department of Veterans Affairs, Pharmacy Customer Care Center (PCCC) located in Waco, Texas, will be available to answer Veterans questions regarding prescription refills, prescription status, identity of medications and other pharmacy related questions. The PCCC staff is able to view Veteran's prescription records and access needed information to answer their questions quickly.

System is Accurate, Secure and Confidential

The phone number is the same phone

number Veterans have called in the past with pharmacy questions. By calling 1-800-771-6106 Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. local time, the Veteran chooses to speak with a pharmacy representative, they will be greeted by a friendly expert VA staff to assist them.

Below, we have provided a list of questions/answers you may have about this process:

Q. Why the change? I've always been able to call my local VA to get my questions answered. Will they still be taking my calls?

A. The change helps to improve the services we provide to you. Instead of calling your local facility, we have now centralized this service with the Pharmacy Customer Care (PCC) program, where specially trained VA employees will answer your questions. You can call any

time between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. local time, Monday – Friday and VA staff will be available to answer your call. This way, more staff is dedicated to answering your calls more quickly.

Q. What could someone outside my facility know about the medical care I received at my local medical center?

A. VA employees at Pharmacy Customer Care (PCC) will use a secure computer system that allows only them to view your pharmacy and medical information. All of your medical records and personal information will

remain at your local medical center. The VA employees will be able to view the information and answer your questions, plus work with the medical center staff to update or change information as needed. And the VA employees at Pharmacy Customer Care will be required to follow strict guidelines in accessing your information. Your privacy and the privacy of your medical records will be protected at all times.

Q. I like the old way. Why are you changing something that works?

A. By centralizing this service, dedicated staff will be more readily available to assist you with your questions. This will improve how quickly your calls are answered and how quickly you get the information you need. And, VA staff at your local medical center will have more time to work on clinical concerns, improving services they provide to you.

Fayetteville VAMC announces new Associate Director

The Fayetteville VA Medical Center will have a new Associate Director next month.

"I am delighted to announce the appointment of James Galkowski as the Associate Director for Operations at the VA Medical Center, Fayetteville, N.C.," said Fayetteville VAMC Director Elizabeth Goolsby. "Jim will join us on Sept. 12, 2010."

Galkowski comes to Fayetteville from the Durham VA Medical Center where he is currently the Associate Chief of Ambulatory Care Service. He is a physician assistant who received bachelor's degree from the State University of New York at Stony Point, and a Master's of Public Administration with a minor in health administration from Long Island University.

The new associate director has served with the Veterans Administration since joining the Durham VAMC staff in March 2001. He said he's very excited about coming to Fayetteville.

"I'm looking forward to the challenges this new position will bring," Galkowski, said. "The Fayetteville VAMC has an outstanding staff working to provide quality care to our Veterans. I'm proud to be joining this group of professionals."

New Clinic

Fayetteville VA Medical Center Director Elizabeth Goolsby and VA Mid-Atlantic Healthcare Network Director Dan Hoffman (center) get help from Robeson County leaders and Veterans in breaking ground for the new Robeson County Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Pembroke, N.C., July 6. The new clinic will provide primary care and mental health services for Veterans in the surrounding areas when it opens early next year.



Photo by Brad Garner

VA announces new hotline for homeless Veterans

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki announced the establishment of a new telephone hotline to provide emergency support and resources to homeless Veterans.

"It is unacceptable for a single Veteran to spend the night on the streets of America," Shinseki said. "The hotline of the new National Call Center for Homeless Veterans will provide homeless Veterans with caring, timely assistance and coordinated access to VA and community services."

Family members, workers at community agencies and non-VA providers also may call the hotline at 1-877-4AID VET to find out about the many programs and services available to assist homeless Veterans. Well-trained expert responders

Homeless Veteran Hotline
1-877-4AID VET

will staff the hotline 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

VA officials recognize that homeless Veterans are in need of food and shelter, clothing, financial assistance, and treatment for medical conditions. Many also require access to permanent housing, Veterans benefits and vocational resources.

VA assistance is available for homeless Veterans who may have mental health issues, substance abuse, depression, traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder. The responders operating

the new hotline will ensure Veterans receive the help they need and deserve.

Last year, Shinseki launched a campaign to eliminate homelessness among Veterans within five years. Since then, the number of Veterans homeless on a typical night has dropped 18 percent.

"This reduction was achieved through VA's commitment to end homelessness among Veterans through enhanced collaboration with federal, state, faith-based, Veteran service organizations and community partners," Shinseki said.

Last year, more than 92,000 homeless Veterans were served by VA's specialized homeless programs.

For more information on the call center, go to <http://www1.va.gov/homeless/nationalcallcenter.asp>.

Army Stop Loss Veterans owed retroactive payments

The Army owes about 120,000 Veterans extra pay and VA is reaching out to find them. The Army is seeking soldiers, Veterans, and survivors of soldiers whose service was involuntarily extended under Stop Loss Authority between September 11, 2001 and September 30, 2008.

The 2009 War Supplemental Appropriations Act stipulates they are eligible for special pay those eligible will receive \$500 for each month or partial month served in stop loss status.

To receive this benefit, those who served under Stop Loss must submit a claim by October 21, 2010. Stop Loss Veterans can submit their on line at <https://www.stoplosspay.army.mil>.

The Army encourages all candidates to visit its Web site to check eligibility and submit claims.

The Army's Web site will also answer frequently asked questions about the claim process and has a link to the program's official Facebook page.

Applicants who have questions not covered by the Web site can e-mail RetroStopLossPay@conus.army.mil or call 877-736-5554.

Veterans can also link to the eligibility and claims information on the VA Vet Center home page at <http://www.vetcenter.va.gov/index.asp>; click on RSLP at the bottom of the left side column.

VA team supports Individual Ready Reserve muster

While they may not wear the uniform on a full time basis anymore, to the Army they are still Soldiers and still subject to recall to active duty.

That's why 95 Individual Ready Reserve Soldiers showed up at the Fayetteville VA Medical Center July 31. The IRR Muster was the Army's way of making sure those Soldiers would be ready if that activation call ever comes.

The event was sponsored by the Army's Human Resources Command and supported by the Fayetteville VAMC and volunteers from other community and Veterans organizations. The overall intent was to conduct a readiness screening and validation event for IRR Soldiers focusing on updating records and Periodic Health Assessments.

All the Soldiers participating in the muster had already completed their active duty commitment, but were still committed to remaining subject to recall until at least the eighth anniversary of their original enlistment.

While being recalled while in IRR status is uncommon, personnel must still



Soldiers from the Individual Ready Reserve sign up for the Army Knowledge Online accounts during the IRR muster at the Fayetteville VA Medical Center July 31. *Photos by Darrell Ford*

maintain their readiness just in case the Army does needs someone with their qualifications.

Planning for the muster took several months, said Darrell Ford, the Fayetteville VAMC's lead project coordinator for the IRR event. OEF/OIF Coordinator Angie Moore, as well as Information

Technology specialists Finis Massey and Donald Russell, were instrumental in the events success, Ford said.

Soldiers from the Army's Human Resources Command, including Brig. Gen. William Waff, worked alongside VA employees and volunteers to process the IRR Soldiers.

After being signed in an escorted to the auditorium for their initial welcome and briefing, the Soldiers received physical, hearing and dental exams, security screenings, assistance with ID cards, and had the opportunity to sign up for their Army Knowledge Online computer accounts.

They received several briefings including OEF/OIF Case Management screening to help facilitate linkage with VA services, had the chance to talk to organizations that set up information displays, and were treated to a picnic lunch prepared by members of American Legion Post 109 and its Auxiliary.

One plus for the Fayetteville VAMC — 30 IRR Soldiers enrolled in the VA health system during the event as well.

General Waff thanked the VA team members for their support, and several received coins from the command's leadership in recognition of the part they played in the event.



Volunteers from American Legion Post 109 Auxiliary serve up lunch for IRR Soldiers, their families and those supporting the IRR muster July 31.



**If living with your Veteran
is as hard as living without him,
contact us.**

When a loved one returns from military deployment troubled by anything from anger to sleep problems, a happy reunion can become a stressful situation. VA has resources to help your Veteran get the treatment and support he or she needs. It's all in complete confidence, and it's all to get your family back on track. **Peace of mind is worth fighting for.**

For more information, please contact:

866-947-8018

Families
AT EASE



**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

Contact VA — in complete confidence **866-947-8018** www.mirecc.va.gov/FamiliesAtEase/